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SUBJECT: PASF DECEMBER 11 UPDATE TO LTG DAYTON ON NABLUS
OPERATIONS

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, per reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (S) Summary. Palestinian Authority Security Forces (PASF) commanders told USSC LTG Dayton December 11 that the security campaign in Nablus is a success, but sustained law and order in Nablus requires the IDF to relax its control over the city. They said PA courts refuse to detain individuals without evidence, leading Israel to complain of a "revolving door" policy in PASF prisons. PASF chiefs said the Nablus security services are capable of maintaining law and order after the Second Special Battalion departs, but that freedom of movement and economic growth are the best guarantors of sustained security in Nablus. PASF chiefs said their efforts in Nablus weakened HAMAS and PA intelligence services will continue monitoring the group. End Summary.

PASF SECURITY OPERATIONS IN NABLUS A SUCCESS

12. (S) West Bank NSF Commander BG Thiab al-'Ali (Abu al-Fatah), Nablus NSF Commander BG Hassan al-Khayri, Head of Nablus Mukhabarat Colonel Abdullah Kamayl, DCO Shawkat al-Hajj, Nablus Chief of Police Colonel Ahmad Sharqawi, and Head of Nablus PSO Colonel Akram al-Rajub updated USSC LTG Dayton December 11 on PASF Nablus operations. Abu al-Fatah described the Nablus operation as successful and said PASF control security in Nablus proper. Colonel Sharqawi said that since November 1, the PASF have referred hundreds of criminal cases to the courts, destroyed over 300 illegal vehicles, and defused 39 bombs.

13. (S) Abu al-Fatah said the PASF learned five lessons that will help them strengthen law and order in the West Bank: 1) the importance of internal cooperation between security services, 2) the need to be detail-oriented, 3) the need to sustain popular support for PASF operations, 4) the need to recruit appropriate people, and 5) the need to issue clear, strict orders for dealing with targeted individuals.

PASF CONTROL LIMITED BY IDF,
COORDINATION SLOWING DOWN

14. (S) Abu al-Fatah said the PASF control Nablus but not the surrounding countryside. Fugitives can evade the PASF, he said, if they move outside of PA-controlled areas. BG al-Khayri and DCO al-Hajj said Israeli coordination on the movement of PASF personnel decreased over the past three weeks, and the IDF has not authorized PASF operations outside the city for the past week. Al-Hajj said the IDF cites

unspecified security concerns when refusing permission, regardless of their operations. The PASF chiefs said the PASF need to move freely to ensure security outside of Nablus.

PASF UNABLE TO DETAIN INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT PROOF

15. (S) Responding to Israeli allegations that the PASF arrest and release prisoners through a "revolving door", al-Khayri said Palestinian courts order the release of suspected criminals and militants if the PASF do not have evidence. Colonel al-Rajub said Israel does not provide credible evidence against these individuals, and stressed the need for the PASF to operate within the law.

GREATER FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
BEST GUARANTOR OF SUSTAINED LAW AND ORDER

16. (S) Abu al-Fatah said the PASF will maintain law and order in Nablus after the 2nd Special Battalion departs by turning the battalion's weapons over to the local Nablus security services and increasing the number of vehicles available. Abu al-Fatah said the Nablus services will be capable and forces from neighboring governorates could deploy if needed.

17. (S) BG al-Khayri said the best guarantor of stability in Nablus would be improved access and movement in and around the city. He said Israel needs to "loosen the siege" to improve living conditions. Colonel Sharqawi said Nablus is being "strangled" and Palestinians would see freer movement as an indication of Israel's seriousness about negotiations. Relaxing the siege on Nablus, he said, would address poverty

and unemployment. Nablus would become an example to other West Bank towns of the benefit of the PASF's security campaign and coordination with Israel, he said.

PASF CAMPAIGN WEAKENED HAMAS IN NABLUS

18. (S) Colonel Kamayl said the PASF weakened HAMAS in Nablus by dismantling cells, confiscating weapons, and disrupting the local Shura council. Kamayl said some HAMAS members voluntarily turned their weapons over to the PASF and renounced the group, which they would never have done to the IDF. Colonel al-Rajub said HAMAS will seek to rebuild its organization in Nablus, but PA intelligence services will continue working against it.

19. (U) LTG Dayton cleared this cable.

WALLES